



## FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

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*For Immediate Release*

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# Winter Solstice Celebrations Mark Sun's Return

During the Roman Empire, the shortest day of the year, the annual winter solstice, was celebrated as the "Birthday of the Sun". Whether marked by rituals, feasts or festivals, the arrival of the winter solstice on December 25th has been a time of celebration around the world for centuries.

This year, help your children understand and participate in both the historical and scientific aspects of these celebrations by introducing them to any of the following Fairfax County Park Authority solstice festivities:

**Family Winter Solstice Celebration Tea-Sunday, December 16, 2007-** Children ages six and older are invited to Historic Green Spring in Alexandria to discover how Christmas traditions are rooted in ancient customs. This family event runs from 1 to 3 p.m. and a traditional English tea follows the activity. The cost is \$25 per person and reservations are required. Please call 703-941-7987.

**Winter Solstice Wonderland- Thursday, December 20 and Saturday, December 22, 2007-** Green Spring Gardens will also be hosting a Solstice Winter Wonderland for preschoolers from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. or 11 a.m. to noon on Thursday and 10 to 11 a.m. on Saturday. Children ages three to five will learn about the seasons and make their own calendar to take home. The event is \$5 per child. For registration and information, call 703-642-5173.

**Facts and Fantasy Solstice Celebration-Saturday, December 22, 2007-** Hidden Oaks Nature Center in Annandale will finally set the story straight! Bring your children by the nature center from 1 to 2 p.m. and help them set apart centuries old solstice facts from fantasies. Children will also learn how the change in sunlight affects both animals and people. All participants will craft a constellation luminary to take home and use as a light for winter's darkest days. A \$5 prepaid reservation is required. For more information, call 703-341-1065.

For further information about these programs, or many other Park Authority program offerings call the sites directly or go online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks).

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703-324-8700 • TTY: 703-803-3354 • ONLINE: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks) • E-MAIL: [parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov)



*Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations, call 703-324-8563 or TTY 703-803-3354. Please allow ten working days in advance of events in order to make the necessary arrangements.*